

REMARKS

Claims 2 and 4-6 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 2, 5 and 6 have been withdrawn.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for initialing the references filed with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on September 10, 2003. Applicant also thanks the Examiner for accepting the drawings filed on September 10, 2003. Applicant further thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim to foreign priority and for confirming that the certified copy of the priority document was received for application No. 09/756,182.

Claim 4 is objected to because of certain informalities.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Chiu et al.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kamimura et al. in view of Grolmann et al.

The Applicants traverse the rejections and request reconsideration.

Claim Objections and Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Applicants respectfully amend claim 4 to place it under a more acceptable form under US patent practice. The revised presentation of claim 4 is believed to be bereft of the grounds for its objection and rejection under section 112.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 4 as best understood is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Chiu et al.

The Applicants respectfully submit a verified translation of the foreign priority document thereby perfecting a foreign priority date of January 13, 2000. Since the foreign priority date of

the present Application is earlier than September 15, 2000, the filing date of Chiu et al., it does not qualify as a prior art to the present Application under any sub-sections of section 102.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kamimura et al. in view of Grolmann et al.

Claim 4 is amended to clarify a limitation to the outer diameter of the separator. Specifically, according to the present invention (as recited in claim 4) the outer diameter of the separator is such that an end of the separator closer to the inner curved face extends towards the inner curved face farther from the outer curved face than a point on the radial line of the separator. Further, the radial line is perpendicular to the axial line and passes through a center of the separator. Still further, the point is at a distance from the outer curved face equal to a diameter of the balls.

The combined teachings of Kamimura and Grolmann do not suggest the above limitation for the outer diameter of the separator.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No.: 10/658,555

Attorney Docket No.: Q77311

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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